A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE ENGLISH NATION.

Thurſday, December 5. 1706.

MY Deſign in the two laſt Papers is to prevent the ill Improvement, that ſeveral Parties may make in *England* of the Affairs in *Scotland*——— I do not by my Expoſition of things allow, that every thing done there is equally right, or with Reſpect to Time and Circumſtances, concerted in the beſt Meaſures——And they that think ſo, may undertake to vindicate the Neceſſity or Expedience for them; for I profeſs my ſelf unfit for that Work—— But I think, the Arguments drawn from them in *England*, are both wrong grounded, and unjuſtly deduced; and on that Head I have been ſo large, which I hope, no body, that reſpects the Neceſſity of ſetting thoſe things in a true Light, which are ſtudiouſly miſ-repreſented, will think impertinent.

I have now another Field before me, in which the Kirk of *Scotland* ſuffers a double Reproach in *England*, and which, tho' it ſeems to be handed by another Sort of People, yet is turn'd to the Diſadvantage of the beſt meaning People, and the *Proteſtant* Intereſt in general, throughout *Scotland*; and that is, That they are indeed at the bottom againſt the eſtabliſh'd Succeſſion of *England*, Enemies to the Houſe of *Hannover*, and Friends to the Intereſt and Family of their late abdicated Monarch.

I do confeſs, there are ſome Reaſons to wonder at the odd Coherence of things in *Scotland*, and when I ſee a *Presbyterian*, and a *Roman Catholick*, a Miniſter of the eſtabliſh'd Church in *Scotland* and an *Epiſcopal Diſſenter*; Men who are the remoteſt in their Intereſt from one another, of any in the World, and not much nearer united in their

their Principles; to see those People, I say, all joyning in their open Pursuit against the Union——Seems to be very surprizing, and I confess, gives too much Ground for the Suspicions and Jealousies, I have been observing, are in Peoples Heads on this Account.

But after all, I think, I owe the *Scots* this Justice to say; that however unhappy this Conjunction seems to be in Appearance, and which I must own, appears to me to be too much a Testimony of the Subtilty of the one, and the Weakness of the other; yet there are several Reasons, why a Judgment of Charity should be made in favour of these, when the Principles of the other being known and profess'd, are less hard to judge of, and their Designs more plainly pointed out, than any of the rest.

To argue therefore, that because many of the *Presbyterians* in *Scotland* are dissatisfied with the Union, that therefore they are for the Restoration of Popery, and King *James* VIII. *as they call him*, is to slander them exceedingly; and I must do them that Justice, as to acknowledge, that even the most violent of those *Presbyterians*, that argue against the Union, are yet very hearty in the Opposition of the *Jacobite* Interest, and this has produc'd a Proposal in the Parliament, even by those that are against the Union, to have the Succession of *Hannover* declared with Limitations.

But as this Scandal is not improv'd in *England* only, but has reached the Persons concern'd, the Commission of the general Assembly in *Scotland* have, I think, vindicated themselves sufficiently from these Aspertions, in a Paper subsequent to their second Address; in which tho' I do not say, there are not some things, which at this time of Day I wish had been left out, yet I shall freely give the World a Sight of the Paper, as a full Defence of the Kirk of *Scotland*, against all the Scandals thrown upon them in *England*, of favouring King *James*'s Interest.

The Paper was presented to the Parliament the .... of *November*, and is as follows.

Unto his Grace Her Majesty's High-Commissioner, and the most Honourable the Estates of Parliament.

The Representation and Petition of the Commission of the general Assembly of this National Church of Scotland,

HUMBLY SHEWETH,

" THat notwithstanding there be many " good Laws made against Popery, " Immoralities and other Disorders; yet " we find our selves under a Necessity to " represent to your Grace and the Estates " of Parliament,

" 1. The lamentable Encrease of Popery, " which is occasion'd by the bold and unrestrained Insolence of trafficking *Popish* " Priests and Jesuits; who not only keep " publick Mass, but meet amongst themselves in great Numbers, and *Popish* Bishops confirming Multitudes of People, " flocking to them avowedly, as if they " were in a *Popish* Country, by the Education of Children in the Principles of Popery at home and abroad, contrary to " the express Laws of this Nation, and by " the Inter-Marriages of *Protestants* and " *Papists*.

" That altho', since the late Revolution, " Endeavours have been us'd for the suppressing of Impiety and Prophaneness, " (not altogether without Success) yet the " same, and in particular that abominable " Sin of Adultery, do much abound in many Parts of the Nation, to the general " Scandal of our Holy Profession, and of " the Reformed Religion.

" 3. And further, that some of the Prelatick Ministers have introduc'd a Form " of Worship in several Parts of this Kingdom, which was never in Use in this " Church, even under Episcopacy, perhaps to gratifie some in a Neighbouring " Church, on which we have no Dependance, and the very attempting whereof " in former Times was deeply resented by " the Nation. Others intrude upon vacant " Churches, and plant Congregations, in " open Contempt of all Authority Ecclesiastick and Civil, not only despising and " trampling upon the Sentences of Suspension and Deposition by Church-Judica-

" tories,

" tories, and of Deprivation by the Privy-
" Council, but even the Authority of the
" High Court of Parliament it ſelf. It
" were almoſt endleſs to enumerate all the
" Irregularities of ſome of the Epiſcopal
" Miniſters with Reſpect to Marriages, ſome
" marrying Men to other Mens Wives, and
" *è contra*; ſome ante-dating Teſtimonials
" to cover the Sin of Uncleanneſs; yea,
" ſome of them preſume privately to ab-
" ſolve Perſons from Scandals, that are
" under Proceſs before the Church-Judica-
" tories; which Diſorders can be verified
" by particular Inſtances of Perſons, Time
" and Place.

" Which things complained, as they
" have very much increaſed by the palpable
" Omiſſion of the Execution of ſuch Laws,
" and for Want of Laws prohibiting *Prote-*
" *ſtants* to marry with *Papiſts*, and for the
" effectual ſuppreſſing and puniſhing of
" Adulteries; ſo we are fully perſwaded,
" that theſe Meaſures taken by ſome Epiſ-
" copal *Diſſenters*, as well as by *Papiſts*, are
" ſupported and encourag'd by a Party diſ-
" affected to the preſent Eſtabliſhment, and
" to the true Intereſts of the Nation, both
" Sacred and Civil, from the Hopes of a
" *Popiſh* Succeſſor to the Crown.

MAY it therefore pleaſe your Grace, and moſt Honourable Eſtates of Parliament, to take the Premiſes to your ſerious Conſideration, and in your great Wiſdom, to fall upon Methods for reſtraining the above-mentioned Evils, and the more effectual Execution of the good Laws already made, and to enact ſuch new Laws, as You ſhall think there anent; and in particular, that you'll be pleas'd utterly to extinguiſh the Hopes of a Popiſh Succeſſor, and to eſtabliſh the Succeſſion of the Crown in the Proteſtant Line, in ſuch a Way as may be moſt effectual for ſecuring Truth, according to our known and declared Principles, maintaining of the Peace of the Nation, and preventing the above-mention'd Evils for the future.

Sign'd in Name, in Preſence, and at the Appointment of the ſaid Commiſſion of the general Aſſembly, by

Edinb. 14. *Nov.* 1706.

Will. Wiſhart, Moderator.

I cannot but think, that all impartial People will from this time clear the *Scots* from *Jacobite* Principles, I mean, the Kirk Party; and however the Friends of that abdicated Cauſe may think, they ſerve themſelves of theſe Gentlemen, they may find by this Paper, they will be deceiv'd; and I would adviſe the Gentlemen of the ſame ſide in *England*, not to truſt too much to it.

'Tis true, I ſpeak this from a View of the Surface of this Matter, and indeed the Surface of things is, what I am upon only, and it is the Surface of the thing, that ſo much Cry is made; for certainly when *Jacobites* in Parliament proteſt in Behalf of the *Williamites*; when they that never went to the Church in their Lives, and car'd not if She was demoliſh'd to morrow, proteſt in her Behalf for Want of Security, and *adhere, as they call it*, there. When theſe things come upon the Stage, I think, it is all meer Surface, and to look farther into it, would be to oblige my ſelf to enter upon a great many ungrateful and unpleaſant Subjects, which at this time I chooſe to bury in Silence, as I hope, they will ſoon be in the Union of both the Kingdoms.

The preſent Buſineſs is to clear the *Preſbyterian* Church of *Scotland* from the Scandal or rather Slander of being enclin'd to reſtore King *James*'s Family and Poſterity—And I think, I could not have taken a properer Seaſon than this, when their own Repreſentation is their Defence, and teſtifies for them, that thoſe Cenſures are groundleſs and ſcandalous.

Nor do I queſtion, but that this Repreſentation will open the Eyes, even of the *Jacobite* Party themſelves, if any of them were ſo fooliſh as to believe, that becauſe theſe Gentlemen did not immediately fall into the Succeſſion, that therefore they muſt needs be of their ſide.

Indeed ſomething very ſtrange muſt fall out, when the *Presbyterians* reſtore that Race; they reſtor'd one King already in both Kingdoms, for let them ſay what they will to it, 'tis plain, the *Presbyterians* in *Scotland* brought King *Charles* II. in there, as their Brethren in *England* did here, and how both have been treated for it, I leave

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